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be chosen among the best — aproved courage & Fidelity — such men can be had for 8 Dollars P Month. A small light rowing skiff with four oars & a cockswain to run in Shallow water where a larger boat cant swim. A man must be acquainted with inland navigation to be capable of traversing the Mississippi — it is a very dangerous River to those not acquainted with it. There must be a block house built on an Island in each river to prevent being cut off or surprized. I hope Sir that you'l not be offended at the bold Language which I make use of — I woud only wish to be understood, as humbly offering my opinion to the first character in America, from whose benevolence many have experienced the smiles of Fortune, that you may long live to enjoy the confidence of your country is

the Sincere wish of Your  
humble Servt.

N. MITCHELL

Alex. Hamilton, Esq.  
Secretary of the Treasury  
Philadelphia  
Feby. 9th 1792.

N. B. All dry goods consumed in Illinois country are at present brot from canada the expense of a voyge (being 3 months) and from New Orleans to St. Louis is very considerable and are as high at New Orleans as Ft. Pitt.

#### A RARE ABOLITIONIST DOCUMENT

In the second quarter of the nineteenth century the Honorable Timothy Jenkins was one of the leading citizens of the village of Oneida Castle, in Oneida county, New York. Jenkins was born at Barre, Massachussetts, in 1799, and was admitted to the bar in 1824. He settled in the village of Vernon, in the town of the same name, Oneida county, and practiced there until about 1832, when he removed to Oneida Castle, in the same town. For a while he served as postmaster and from 1839 to 1845 he was district attorney for Oneida county. From this office he entered the twenty-ninth congress as a democratic representative. After serving through the thirtieth congress, he was defeated for the thirty-first, but was reëlected to the thirty-second. He died at Martinsburg, New York, in 1859, leaving a considerable library, mainly of government publications.

The town of Vernon adjoins that of Kirkland, in which, at the village of Clinton, is located Hamilton college. Recently Jen-

kins' daughter presented her father's library to the college. Among the books is one of unique interest. Not even the Library of congress has a copy of this edition, though it possesses one of an earlier edition.

An appropriate name for the little volume would be "The answer to the proslavery argument," except that it was published several years before that pronouncement. It is a duodecimo volume of 220 pages, bound in figured purple cloth, and entitled *The liberty minstrel*,<sup>1</sup> by George W. Clark. Copyrighted originally in 1844, the Hamilton college copy belongs to the sixth edition, published by the author in New York in 1846. The Library of congress copy belongs to the first edition. According to the Library of congress, "the work is unique as an Anti-slavery publication, and for its rarity."

The preface explains the purpose of the book, on the basis that "all creation is musical—all nature speaks the language of song." After reënforcing this statement with poetical quotations, the author proceeds: "Who does not desire to see the day when music in this country, *cultivated and practiced by ALL*—music of a chaste, refined and elevating style, shall go forth with its angel voice, like a spirit of love upon the wind, exerting upon all classes of society a rich and healthful moral influence. When its wonderful power shall be made to subserve every righteous cause—to aid every humane effort the promotion of man's social, civil and religious well-being." (Apparently the author thought more of prosody than of syntax). Accordingly, "an ardent love of humanity—a deep consciousness of the injustice of slavery—a heart full of sympathy for the oppressed, and a due appreciation of the blessings of freedom, has given birth to the poetry comprising this volume." Mr. Clark wishes to see these sentiments of "love, of sympathy, of justice and humanity" expressed in such poetry, "embalmed in sweet music; so that *all the people* may sing of the wrongs of slavery, and the blessings of liberty" until the influence of these sentiments shall "'undo the heavy burdens and let the oppressed go free.'" He has long been contemplating the publication of such a work, he tells us, modestly adding that

<sup>1</sup> The writer is indebted to Professor Joseph D. Ibbotson, librarian of Hamilton college, for bringing this work to his attention.

"many have been impatiently waiting its appearance." Associations of singers "having the love of liberty in their hearts" should be formed immediately in all communities to learn these melodies and spread them abroad. "To all true friends of universal freedom, the LIBERTY MINSTREL is respectfully dedicated."

Whittier's "Gone, Sold and Gone" is the first song, with appropriately doleful music by Mr. Clark. Indeed, most of the music is of his composition, and in several cases, the initials "G. W. C." indicate that he is the author of the words also. Several other of Whittier's poems are included, adapted to various tunes; notably, "The Yankee girl," with music by Clark; and "Our countrymen in chains" to the tune of "Beatitude." Longfellow's "Quadroon girl" is set to an air of Clark's, and his "Slave singing at midnight" to a Bavarian air. Two of Cowper's poems, two of Mrs. Sigourney's, one of Mrs. Hemans' and one of Burns's appear. Next to Whittier, who has six contributions, is Miss M. E. Chandler, with five. She was, of course, the Quakeress abolitionist poet, the friend of Lundy and Birney. Burns's "A man's a man for a' that" is set to the tune of "Our warrior's heart," while the tune of "Scots wha ha'e wi' Wallace bled" is borrowed for an election song. Lowell's "Are ye truly free?" is adapted to the air "Martyn," while N. P. Willis' "Pleasant land we love" is given the air "Carrier dove."

As in a hymnal, several songs are adapted to the same air; thus "Ye heralds of freedom" and "I would not live away" are both arranged to music by Kingsley.

Familiar airs are used freely. Some of the best known are: "Oft in the stilly night," (set to a parody by Clark); the *Marseillaise*; "Dan Tucker;" "Rosin the bow;" "Bonnie Doon;" "Yankee Doodle;" "America;" "Watchman, what of the night;" "Zion;" "Greenland's icy mountains;" "My faith looks up to thee;" "Sweet Afton;" and "Calvary."

"The song of the Coffle gang" is stated to be the actual lament of negroes in the hands of the slave-dealer. The music is by Clark. "Stolen we were" is said to be by "a colored man." Strange to say, only two songs are specifically credited

to Garrison's *Liberator*, though doubtless others were culled from it. These two are: "O pity the slave mother," to the air of "Araby's daughter;" and "The bondman," to the air of "The troubador"—of which it is a parody.

Naturally, not all these songs were written or set to music at one time, or just for publication in this collection. Presumably some were prepared for the presidential election of 1840, when James G. Birney first ran as the candidate of the liberal party; others, perhaps, for his race in 1884. Several of the songs refer to Birney. Two are set to the tune of "The warrior's heart," namely, "The liberty battle song" and "Birney and liberty." An "Ode to James G. Birney," by Elizur Wright, Jr., was harmonized by Clark, while "We're for freedom through the land," by J. E. Robinson, has for its refrain, "We will vote for Birney." Other campaign songs are "The liberty party" and "The liberty voter's songs," both by Wright; "The ballot," by J. E. Dow, to the tune of "Bonnie Doon," and "The ballot-box," to an "air from 'Lincoln.' "

The last thirty pages of the book constitute "The liberty appendix," though why "appendix" it is hard to say, for neither subjects, tunes, authors, nor composers differ materially from the rest of the work.

A few selections from this repertoire will show its nature better than further comment. Set to the tune of "When I can read my title clear," is "Come join the abolitionists," of which the first stanza gives a fair notion:

Come join the Abolitionists,  
Ye young men, bold and strong,  
And with a warm and cheerful zeal  
Come help the cause along;  
Come help the cause along;  
Come help the cause along;  
And with a warm and cheerful zeal  
Come help the cause along.

Fearsome indeed is "A vision," with words by Creary, music by Clark. A footnote informs the reader that it is a "scene in the nether world—purporting to be a conversation between the departed [*sic*] ghost of a departed southern slaveholding

clergyman, and the devil!" The author stationed himself near the infernal portals and heard someone salute Satan thus:

"Hail, Prince of Darkness, ever hail,  
Adored by each infernal,  
I come among your gang to wail  
And taste of death eternal."

"Where are you from?" the fiend demands,  
"What makes you look so frantic?  
Are you from Carolina's strand,  
Just west of the Atlantic?  
Are you the man of blood and birth,  
Devoid of human feeling,  
The wretch, I saw, when last on earth,  
In human cattle dealing?"

After five similar stanzas, the cheerful ditty concludes:

Our ghost stood trembling all the while —  
He saw the scene transpiring;  
With soul aghast and visage sad,  
All hope was now retiring.  
The Demon cried, on vengeance bent,  
"I say, in haste, retire!  
And you shall have a negro sent  
To attend and punch the fire."

Can one imagine a more depressing experience than to listen to a group of sincere but humorless fanatics chanting such words to funereal tunes?

The "Ode to Birney" begins thus:

We hail thee, Birney, just and true,  
The calm and fearless, staunch and tried,  
The bravest of the valiant few,  
Our country's hope, our country's pride!  
In freedom's battle take the van;  
We hail thee as an honest man.

Parodies are numerous, of which the following will suffice. "For the election" is, of course, a parody on Bannockburn, of which this is the first stanza:

Ye who know and do the right,  
Ye who cherish honor bright,

Ye who worship love and light,  
Choose your side today.  
Succor Freedom, now you can,  
Voting for an honest man;  
Let not slavery's blight and ban  
On your ballot lay.

To the tune of America three poems were sung. The longest begins:

My country, 'tis for thee,  
Dark land of slavery,  
For thee I weep;  
Land where the slave has sighed,  
And where he toiled and died  
To serve a tyrant's pride —  
For thee I weep.

Perhaps the best parody is one on Alexander Selkirk, to the air of "Old de Fleury."

I am monarch of nought I survey,  
My wrongs there are none to dispute;  
My master conveys me away.  
His whims or caprices to suit.  
O slavery, where are the charms  
That "patriarchs" have seen in thy face?  
I dwell in the midst of alarms,  
And serve in a horrible place.

One song deserves quotation in full. This is the "Slaveholder's lament": words by L. P. Judsen; music arranged from "Lucy Neal" by G. W. C.

"What shall we do?" slaveholders cry,  
Overwhelmed with dreadful grief;  
"Slavery we fear, must quickly die,  
Unless we find relief.  
Fanatics labor, night and day,  
The North is in a blaze,  
While in the South, young Cassius Clay  
Fears not his voice to raise.  
"We preach and print in every mood,  
And rob the 'negro pen'  
*Railroad* and stages through the wood  
Take '*things*' and make them '*men*.'

But worst of all, the Birney crew  
Seem reckless of our fate —  
Of all the acts you've seen them do  
The *vote's* the thing we hate.

“These are our fears and this our dread,  
They're based on grounds too true,  
That slavery soon must yield its head  
And vanish like the dew;  
The old ‘North Star’ we've *voted down*,  
And told him not to shine,  
But still he gives Victoria's crown  
These ‘*things*’ from Southern clime.

“We've worked and toiled and raved and foamed  
And hoped to keep them down  
But prayers to Congress snugly room'd,  
Unread, referr'd or known;  
We've robbed the mail and taken lives,  
And then to fright the rest,  
We've brandished rifles, bowie-knives,  
‘Cold steel and Dupont's best.’

“What shall we do? O what, say what!  
Our foes increase and rise,  
Old slavery reels! the fever's hot —  
She pants — she gasps — she dies,  
    *What shall we do?* We'll give it up,  
And with the North agree,  
To take the draught from freedom's cup  
LET ALL MANKIND BE FREE.”

Evidently this collection was supposed to furnish inspiration to both political and religious gatherings of abolitionists. Sincerity, but the sincerity of the narrow zealot, breathes from every page. Despite the fact of the six editions (if not more), the “Minstrel” could not have had a very wide vogue or a great influence. The writer has been unable to find a single reference to it in the biographies of the abolitionist leaders, the most pretentious histories, such contemporary periodicals as *Nile's register*, the *North American review*, the *New Englander*, or the histories of American literature. Nor is George W. Clark mentioned in the biographical dictionaries or the works of reference



on musical history. It is obvious that he was both a composer and a versifier; probably he was a teacher of music also, as well as an antislavery agitator. A footnote to "A tribute to departed worth," one of the "Minstrel's" collection, reads: "As sung by G. W. C. at the erection of the monument to the memory of Myron Holley, Mount Hope, Rochester. It may be sung as a dirge." Evidently Mr. Clark was also a singer—perhaps a concert singer. Myron Holley, who died in 1841, was a lawyer and editor of Rochester, New York, who took a prominent part in the anti-Masonic and antislavery movements.

It is interesting to note that in 1854, Myron Holley Clark was elected governor of New York by a fusion of antislavery whigs and democrats, prohibitionists and independents, who called themselves "republicans." He was the son of the Reverend Joseph Clark, who may have been a relative of George W. Clark.

Perhaps the moral to be drawn from the accidental reappearance of this little volume is the need for greater attention to local history.

MILLEDDGE L. BONHAM, JR.